SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I am coming to the question. These countries have the potential for food processing, and they are exporting seafood in a large way in the open international market. India is not able to compete with them. Therefore, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether with the coordination of the Agriculture Ministry, because the prawn culture and pisciculture has to come from the Agriculture Ministry only, and as far the financial assistance.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, put the question.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I am coming to it. Earlier the subsidy that has been given to these industries has been slashed now. The hon. Minister wants the food-processing industry to come up, and it is a very good novel plan which the hon. Minister is telling that in every parliamentary constituency, it should be there. My question is: Would you increase the subsidy?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, as I told, the hon. Agriculture Minister is heading the GoM, and we are still in the process of finalising the shape of policy. I can say, under his leadership, we are having this mission to achieve, because agriculture production is also going to be doubled. So, we want that food-processing sector should grow much more faster, and we would like to use the good offices of our hon. Members to plead for the enhancement and restructuring of our proposals, so that we can provide further.

Utilisation of Railway Safety Fund for road safety works

*183. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:†

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railway Safety Fund was created to finance works relating to road safety measures and if so, the reasons for not using the funds for safety purposes;

(b) whether a train mowed a trolley at the unmanned railway crossing near Nagpur recently killing 55 persons; and

(c) if so, whether the matter has been inquired into to bring to book the authorities responsible for not using the Railway Safety Fund for the purpose it was created?

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Santosh Bagrodia.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) Railway Safety Fund has been set up to channelise the Railways' share of the diesel cess and petrol cess, received from the Central Road fund, to be utilized exclusively for road safety works such as construction of road over and under bridges in replacement of busy level crossing, safety works at level crossings, including their manning etc. The fund fund is non-lapsable and is solely used for above mentioned purposes.

(b) On 03.02.2005, while 5 RN passenger train was on the run between Dumrikhurd and Kanhan stations of Nagpur Division of South East Central Railway, it was hit by a tractor trolley at an unmanned level crossing, resulting in death of 58 occupants of the tractor trolley.

(c) The matter was inquired into and it was concluded that the accident had happened due to negligence of the motor trolley driver, who failed to observe normal precautions while crossing the unmanned level crossing. No authority was found responsible.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, it is very sad, the answer says the accident, which took place, was inquired by the Railway Authorities themselves. That means, the culprit is inquiring himself. So, in the process, they say that it is not their fault; it is the fault of the people who came on the line. I fully agree that it is their bad luck. But the Railway people should take some precautions at such points. Coming to my question, by when hundred per cent unmanned crossing will become manned? Because that is a necessity. We can't continue with this kind of conclusions.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, regarding the first part of the question, the culprit himself inquiring into the accident, we have got a system in the Railways, when there is a very severe accident which calls for the inquiry by the Railway Safety Commissioner, he does it. He also notifies that in case, he is not able to do it, or he considers that it does not involve such seriousness, he asks the Railways to have a departmental inquiry in which all the responsible officers of JA grade officers are asked to inquire. In the instant case, acutually, it is not the fault of the Railways. It is an unmanned gate. In 2003, our density survey gave only 2,100 figures where we are

not at all required to man the LC. It is an unmanned LC. The tractorwala was fully drunk and unlicensed. He took the truck inside the track and the passenger train, the Nagpur passenger train, coming from that side, hit against that, causing death of 58 people; and for which we were not even required to pay any compensation. Hon'ble Minister Mr. Rathwaji who was there on the site, on humanitarian grounds, announced Rs. 1 lakh for each of the deceased families and paid Rs. 58 lakhs plus Rs. 25,000 for injured which is not at all required. It is only on humanitarian ground. After knowing that it is not at all required to man, we ordered for manning it. Accordingly, it has been manned at present.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How many unmanned level crossings are there and when are you going to man them?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, in this country, we have 18708 unmanned level crossings. We have identified, out of them, only 1018 which qualify for manning. For manning, there are some criteria. There are three criteria involved in that. First is, clear visibility, in which, at least, 6000 train vehicles units to pass through it, out of which road vehicles should be more than 180 vehicles. Second is, restricted visibility in which 6000 train vehicles units passing through it and road vehicles more than 120. Third is, restricted visibility and at least, three to six thousand train vehicles units passing through it.

Sir, I am coming to the point Because this is a Road Safety fund in which we are getting from the cess levied on diesel and petrol which is accrued to the account, we are spending on that. We have got sufficient funds for that. But only in the eligible cases of 1018; we have now sanctioned about 797. Out of this, we would be taking 300 and odd this year. It would mean, if every unmanned gate is to be manned, we require about Rs. 2,200 crore of capital investment and about Rs. 555 crores as recurring cost. This is not just possible.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, my second supplementary is: Does the Railway Minister have any plans for zero per cent tolerance for safety requirements, at least, in five to ten years or we continue to lose our ordinary citizens? Do you plan to introduce Anti-Collision Device which has been mentioned by the Railway Minister earlier on all the trains on top priority? If so, by when do you think all the trains will hve Anti-Collision Device installed?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, this is a technology purely evolved by our country, particularly by the KRCL, the Konkan Railway Corporation. In fact, they have already installed it, only to find out its success. In the North-eastern side, the North Frontier Railway, for 1736 kilometres, we have already taken up. It is in fine-tuning stage. Very soon, it would be done. In the same way, in Southern Railways, South-Western, South-Central and Northern Railway, an equal amount of 1729 kilometres will be taken up and ACD will be installed, though it is highly expensive. But in the interest of the lives of the people of this country, we will definitely do it, it found successful. But then, we could not set a date. It is already provided in KRCL; it is in fine-tuning. In other places, though we have not mentioned, but we will do it. I assure the hon. Member, this is our priority, we will definitely take care of it.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: धन्यवाद, उपसभापति जी। उपसभापति जी, यह सवाल रेलवे सेफ्टी से सम्बन्धित है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि एक तरफ आप सेफ्टी रिक्वायरमेंट्स के लिए जीरो टोलरेंस की बात कह रहे हैं और दूसरी तरफ आपने एक ऑर्डर जारी करके यह कहा है कि रेलवे वैगंस में 4 टन एक्सेस माल लादा जा सकता है। इससे यह जरूर है कि आपको अतिरिक्त पैसा तो मिल रहा है, लेकिन हमारे रेलवे ट्रैक की क्षमता को देखते हुए क्या आपका यह ऑर्डर रेलवे की सुरक्षा के लिए खतरा पैदा नहीं करेगा?

SHRI R. VELU: This is a good question raised by the hon. Member. In fact, this year, we have adopted this policy. Indian railways have been carrying all these years about 55/58 tons, and now we have said, "It can be plus-4 plus 6 or plus-8, like that." This is not that we have applied this policy to all the routes. We have identified certain defined routes which can carry this load. Before introducing this, we also got checked whether the bridges are in order, whether the tracks can take the load, etc. Having conducted the test, trial runs were carried out. Only then, we have implemented this decision. I assure the hon. Member that we will not sacrifice safety because we want more tons to be carried or more earnings to be made. This is not at all our policy. But, on the other hand, in the Budget, our hon. Minister, Shri Lalu Prasadji, assured that even with the Golden Quadrilateral project in place, we are now assuring the country of 100 kilometre per hour of the freight train and we may be able upgrade the system in which this kind of excess tonnage can be carried.

SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Sir, it is a matter of shame for the railways that in Nagpur, in my State, 56 people lost their lives at a stroke at an unmanned station and the Minister says that there are 18,000 unmanned crossings, and they have taken up manning of only 1000 crossings. They have got a huge fund allocation at their disposal. I want to know that till the programme is successful, why can't they use the people under broader employment scheme announced by the Railway Minister, for manning these unmanned crossings. I am suggesting so because railways' technical programme of manning the crossings will take a long time. So, what is the problem in manning them, at least, for the interim period? Shri Santosh Bagroadia himself has said, what is that technical anti-collision device for preventing collision between trains and to save these places when one train is passing very fast?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, put the question.

SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: My main question is: the meantime, can these crossings be manned all the time with all the village employment available and the hon. Minister everyday talking from housetop that he is going to employ thousands and thousands of people?

SHRI R. VELU: Well, I have already answered the question partly because the resource is not a constraint in the sense that only the eligibility of those LCs is the criterion, although I said, 1018 of which 700 and odd have already been sanctioned and balance 300 and odd will be definitely sanctioned next year. Why I am saying this is because this is not going to create employment in the sense that we have got other areas where we provide employment. Of course, this can also give employment, maybe if it is eligibile LC; manned LC means three shifts, in which three people can be employed. Anyway, that point is well taken. But, it cannot do manning of all the 18000 and odd crossings because of the constraint of resources of about Rs. 2200 crores.

SHRI R. VELU: Yes.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, some couple of years ago, there was a proposal to the MPLADS Fund from the Railway Minister that Members of Parliament should be allowed to give money for giving that infrastructure for manning those unmanned railway crossings. Now, if the Government can take the decision, if you don't have resources, then we can utilise those resorces from our Funds in every constituency.

Only the recurring expenses will have to be spent by the Government. Shri Vedprakash Goyal asked a very valuable question.There is an employment scheme under which you are going to give employment to the people. The Government, in this present Budget, have allocated a large amount of fund. This will create, according to your answer, employment for three people. It is not necessary that they have to be very educated people. You can give them training and they will also give training to the people on railway safety. If you do so, such an accident that took place in Nagpur would not take place. (*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you going to make use of the MPLADS Funds? That is the question.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, in fact, I welcome the suggestion of the hon. Member. The hon. Member can also contribute liberally.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Yes I already did so.

SHRI R. VELU: To man an unmanned gate it requires Rs. 12 lakhs as capital investment. So, she should be prepared to take care of, at least, one LC.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Hon. Minister, I have already done it. That is why I am requesting others.

SHRI R. VELU: Thank you. She has mentioned about the recurring cost. We require Rs. 3 lakhs per year. If we take ten years for capitalising it, the recurring cost will be 10 x 3, that is, Rs. 30 lakhs. We have to capitalise that recurring cost of ten years. The point is whether it is in a position to do it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You would get from the MPLADS Funds only the capital, not your recurring expenditure.

MR. R. VELU: It becomes Rs. 30 lakhs plus Rs. 12 lakhs, that is, Rs. 42 lakhs. The initial capital cost is borne by hon'ble MP from MPLADS and recurring cost is borne by Railways under this scheme.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You please inform the House as to how many MPs have utilised the funds under the MPLAD Scheme for this purpose.

MR. R. VELU: Just now I don't have the information.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question No. 184.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Sir, I have a supplementary.

श्री उपसभापति: आप जल्दी बोलिए। I have to take up, at least, two more questions.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: The Justice Sikri Committee has given a report on railway safety. Justice Sikri was the Chairman of that Committee. It submitted a comprehensive report on railway accidents and railway safety. How many recommendations of that Committee have been accepted and implemented? How many recommendations are still being considered or have not been implemented? This was the only Committee and after that no Committee on Railway Safety was constituted.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, just now I don't have the information. The hon. Member can put a separate question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can give the information to the hon. Member.

Unauthorised structures in Wild Life Sanctuaries

*184 SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that unautorized structures violative of Revenue Act within the precincts of Ranthambore National Sancturary have been demolished;

(b) if so, the details thereof:

(c) the other wild life sanctuaries and national parks where unauthorized structures exist in their precincts; and

(d) what is Government's plan to free them from unauthorized land use to ensure safety of wild animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir

(b) The details as provided by the State are given in the Statement-I (*See* below)